



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



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### ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

#### DEQ OFFERS RECYCLING TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

(Baton Rouge) Louisiana, like the rest of the nation, produces more garbage during December than any other month of the year. You can make the holidays easier for you, your family and on the environment by planning ahead and making sound environmental choices. DEQ suggests a few simple things that will help make the holidays worry free.

#### **“Pre-cycle” your Christmas tree**

Practice “pre-cycling” by taking recycling or reuse into consideration when you buy. How do you do this? Simple. Consider purchasing an artificial tree that does not have to be discarded or recycled and is not a fire hazard. You can buy a live tree and plant it in your yard after the holidays. If you buy a cut tree, plan your decorations to minimize flocking, tinsel and decorations that will have to be removed before recycling. Usually Christmas tree collections are held in the first two weeks of January and recyclable trees are used in coastal restoration or compost projects. Check out the Coastal Restoration Division of the Department of Natural Resources on the [use of Christmas trees in coastal Louisiana](http://www.savelawetlands.org/site/Xmas/xmas3.html) at <http://www.savelawetlands.org/site/Xmas/xmas3.html>.

#### **Innovate Your Gift Wrapping**

Save and reuse gift bags. Homemade and endlessly reusable Christmas theme fabric with Velcro fasteners can substitute for paper wrap. Large or odd size gifts may be placed in Christmas theme fabric bags with drawstring tops. Use attractive, decorative gift boxes and forego wrapping.

#### **You Are Not Really Recycling Until You Buy Recycled**

Many more quality products are being made with recycled content – from fleece jackets made with recycled plastic to shirts, shoes and most paper products. Recycled content products are widely available. Ask your retailer if you cannot find the product you want in recycled content.

#### **Recycle Those Foam Peanuts**

Usually a local mailbox or postal shipping store will take your foam peanuts for recycling. If you need to track down the nearest dealer, call “The Peanut Hotline” at 800-828-2214. If you are a retailer and want to participate in “The Peanut Hotline” and receive consumer peanuts, check out <http://www.loosefillpackaging.com/hotline/>.

(more)

## **Much of Christmas can be recycled!**

Most cardboard is recyclable and there is a high demand for old cardboard. Use rechargeable batteries in all those electronic toys, cameras and gadgets. When your rechargeable nickel cadmium, nickel metal hydride, lithium ion, or small sealed lead battery no longer holds a charge, call the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation at **800-8-battery** or use their web page at <http://www.rbrc.org> for the nearest battery recycling drop off. Unfortunately the high levels of ink and aluminum foils used in wrapping paper are not conducive to recycling.

## **Have a safe Christmas**

Never burn Christmas wrapping in a fireplace. Do not burn Christmas trees in a fireplace. More holiday safety information is available from the [Louisiana State Fire Marshall](http://www.dps.state.la.us/sfm/HolidaySafety03.pdf) at <http://www.dps.state.la.us/sfm/HolidaySafety03.pdf>.

Go to [http://www.deq.state.la.us/assistance/recycling/index\\_home.htm](http://www.deq.state.la.us/assistance/recycling/index_home.htm) for more DEQ Christmas and recycling ideas. Have ideas you want to share? Contact us at [deqassistance@LA.GOV](mailto:deqassistance@LA.GOV).

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